

This record is a partial extract of the original cable. The full text of the original cable is not available.

C O N F I D E N T I A L KINSHASA 002143

SIPDIS

E.O. 12958: DECL: 11/24/2014

TAGS: PGOV CG

SUBJECT: RUBERWA ENGAGES IN QUIET DIPLOMACY ON BANYAMULENGE ISSUE

Classified By: PolCouns MSanderson, reasons 1.4 b/d.

¶1. (C) PolCouns spoke November 20 with Muller Ruhimbika, a Banyamulenge leader, and November 22 with Jean-Marie Emungu, VP Azarias Ruberwa's chief-of-staff, about Ruberwa's quick trip to eastern Congo November 18-20. Accompanied by General Masunzu (who commands Banyamulenge troops fiercely opposed to Rwanda), Ruberwa visited Uvira and Minembwe and spoke to the Banyamulenge communities there. According to Muller, Ruberwa found the Banyamulenge in Minembwe to be in good spirits, but cautioned them to treat their non-Banyamulenge (minority) neighbors "well and kindly," so that in places like Uvira and Bukavu, the Banyamulenge would be treated well by other Congolese (the majority). Emungu said that Ruberwa then joined North Kivu Governor Serufuli for a visit to the Masisi Plain, where there has consistently been tension in recent months among Mai Mai, Interhamwe, displaced Banyamulenge, and Congolese military. Emungu said that Ruberwa urged the Banyamulenge to return to South Kivu (most of the Banyamulenge IDPs in Masisi fled there in time from areas near Bukavu when that city came under attack), and specifically suggested that they go to Minembwe, where they will be safe.

¶2. (C) Comment: Unhindered by the normal spate of negative publicity surrounding any of his attempts to visit eastern Congo, Ruberwa seems to have been quietly effective. Monuc Bukavu told PolCouns November 23 there is a movement of Banyamulenge IDPs back into South Kivu, although it is not clear yet whether their destination might be Minembwe. The sole potential problem with this effort is that it continues the trend toward "Banyamulenge-land" within South Kivu, a zone protected by Masunzu and his men, which ultimately could set up conflict between Masunzu and other FARDC elements. In the meantime, however, Minembwe certainly could be a safehaven destination for returning urban Banyamulenge from Bukavu and Uvira who find themselves homeless and unwelcome in those cities. Returning, even temporarily, to the High Plains could possibly be one way to resolve the current pressures by refugees in Cyangugu (Rwanda) who wish to return to the DRC but currently are prohibited from doing so, at least to Bukavu. Ruberwa has now begun a European trip during which he will visit London, Paris and Brussels and will, among other matters, discuss the Banyamulenge situation in eastern Congo. Likewise, Muller and his compatriot Enock (a Parliamentarian) will be in the U.S. for a visit, beginning with a conference in Maine sponsored by diaspora Banyamulenge. Muller's return from exile in France seems to have launched an effort by the Banyamulenge to reach out to the international community to explain their situation and request assistance.

MEECE